Provisional: not to be quoted without reference to the writer

R.V. TELLINA

Report of Cruise 7a/67

Staff:

R. J. Wood
T. J. Hulme

Duration:

27th July–16th August.

Aims:

1. To investigate the distribution and abundance of 0-group herring along the English east coast, using beach seine and midwater trawls, between approximately the Farn Islands in the north, and Dungeness in the south.

2. To collect samples of herring from the Wash and Thames estuary for Dr. Khalil (Commonwealth Bureau of Helminthology).

Narrative:

TELLINA sailed from Lowestoft at 1140 hours on 27th July and made a good passage northwards, reaching Amble at 1430 hours next day. During the following six days, fishing was carried out at various localities both inshore with the beach seine and shrimp trawl, and offshore with the midwater sprat trawl, between Amble and the Wash. TELLINA returned to Lowestoft at 1910 hours on 3rd August. TELLINA sailed again at 0915 hours on 5th August and continued the work southwards as far as Hastings. Beach seining was restricted during this part of the cruise due to the breakdown of the dinghy outboard motor. Attempts to have this rectified both in Dover and Ramsgate proved unsuccessful and TELLINA returned to Lowestoft at 2130 hours on 10th August. During the following six days, work was carried out from Lowestoft on a daily basis, and because of the exceptionally fine weather enjoyed for nearly the whole of this cruise, the programme was completed by the evening of 16th August.

Results:

1. In the coastal waters of the northern region, the overall abundance of both autumn spawned 0-group herring and sprats was found to be low; in fact to the north of the Tyne and south of Bridlington, both were extremely scarce. There was also a general lack of echo trace inshore along most of the north east coast although good "plume" traces were seen a few miles offshore between Sunderland and Blyth. An attempt to sample these with the midwater sprat trawl, proved unsuccessful as all shoals avoided the nets quite easily, thus indicating that they were probably composed of fairly large fish. On this evidence it would seem that the 1966 year class in the Bank herring stock is a poor one, and that sprat concentrations in the Wash this winter, may again be less plentiful for the second successive year.

The contrast in the southern region was extremely marked. From just north of Great Yarmouth to Dungeness, fish echo trace was almost continuous in the coastal waters and also across the Thames estuary. Although this trace was found to be mainly associated with a very abundant sprat year class (? 1967 year class), winter spawned 0-group herring were also present in considerable numbers and appeared to be at least 2-3 times more numerous than in the previous two years. This was most encouraging and may indicate some recovery by the Downs herring stock, particularly the Channel spawning component.

Further observations were made on the increase in size of both sprats and 0-group herring with increasing depth and distance from the shore.

2. Although no herring were caught in the Wash, several samples were collected for Dr. Khalil from the Thames estuary.

R. J. Wood
16/8/67

Initialled: A.J.L.

Seen in draft: W. Burroughs
A. Burd

Distribution:

Dr. Cole
Mr. Lee
Captain Aldiss
Dr. Cushing
British Trawlers' Fed. Ltd.
Mr. Bolster
Mr. Burd
Mr. Cattley
Mr. Corlett
Mr. Garrod
Dr. Hardon Jones
Mr. Iles
Dr. Jamieson
Mr. Margetts
Mr. Trout
Mr. Holden
Dr. Purdom
Mr. Bridger
Mr. Mitson
Mr. Tungate
Mr. Williams
Mr. Wood
Mr. Adams
Mr. Mills

Mr. Kay
Miss Conolly
General Lab.
Lab. Registry
Library (2)
Mr. Whiting
Mr. Simpson
Dr. Reynolds
Chief Inspector
All District Inspectors
Fisheries Registry
Skipper Burroughs
Mr. Buchanan Wollaston
Mr. W. Baird, D.A.F.S.
Mr. Glover
Hydrographic Department
Dr. Lucas
Director, N.I.O.
Dr. Peachey
Mr. Shelbourne
White Fish Authority

Mr. Hulme